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Top Secret 217

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Thursday February 10, 1977 CG NIDC 77-033C

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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

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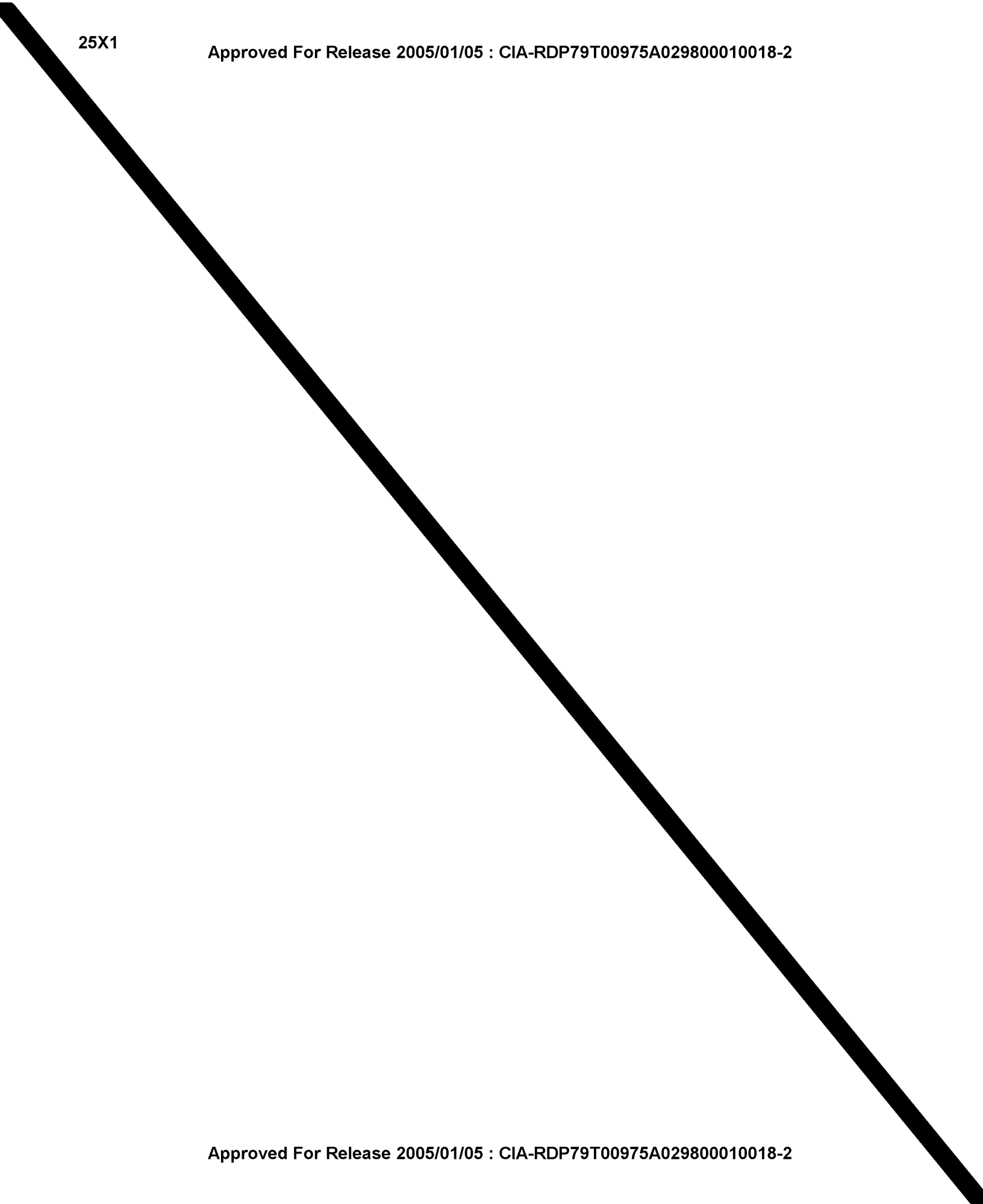

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Thursday February 10, 1977

25X1 [redacted] 25X1

The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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USSR - MIDDLE EAST: Relations

25X1 [redacted] The chief of the Soviet Foreign Ministry Near East Department, M.D. Sytenko, arrived in Cairo on Tuesday to begin a ten-day tour of Arab capitals; he will be trying to encourage an early resumption of the Geneva conference on the Middle East.

25X1 [redacted]

25X1 [redacted] Sytenko, in recent conversations with foreign officials in Moscow, has been stressing the importance of returning to the Geneva forum and has even tried to be flexible on the question of Palestinian participation at the conference. He has on occasion, for example, dropped the usual Soviet formula for Palestinian participation at Geneva on a "basis of full equality and from the very beginning."

25X1 [redacted] Late last year, Sytenko also made a pitch for the USSR and US to work together to "find a common language and a common approach on how to proceed as cochairmen" of the conference. Soviet party chief Brezhnev's speech at Tula last month stressed the importance of Soviet-US cooperation on reaching a "mutually acceptable solution" in the area, and an *Izvestia* article reiterated this theme on the day Sytenko departed from Moscow.

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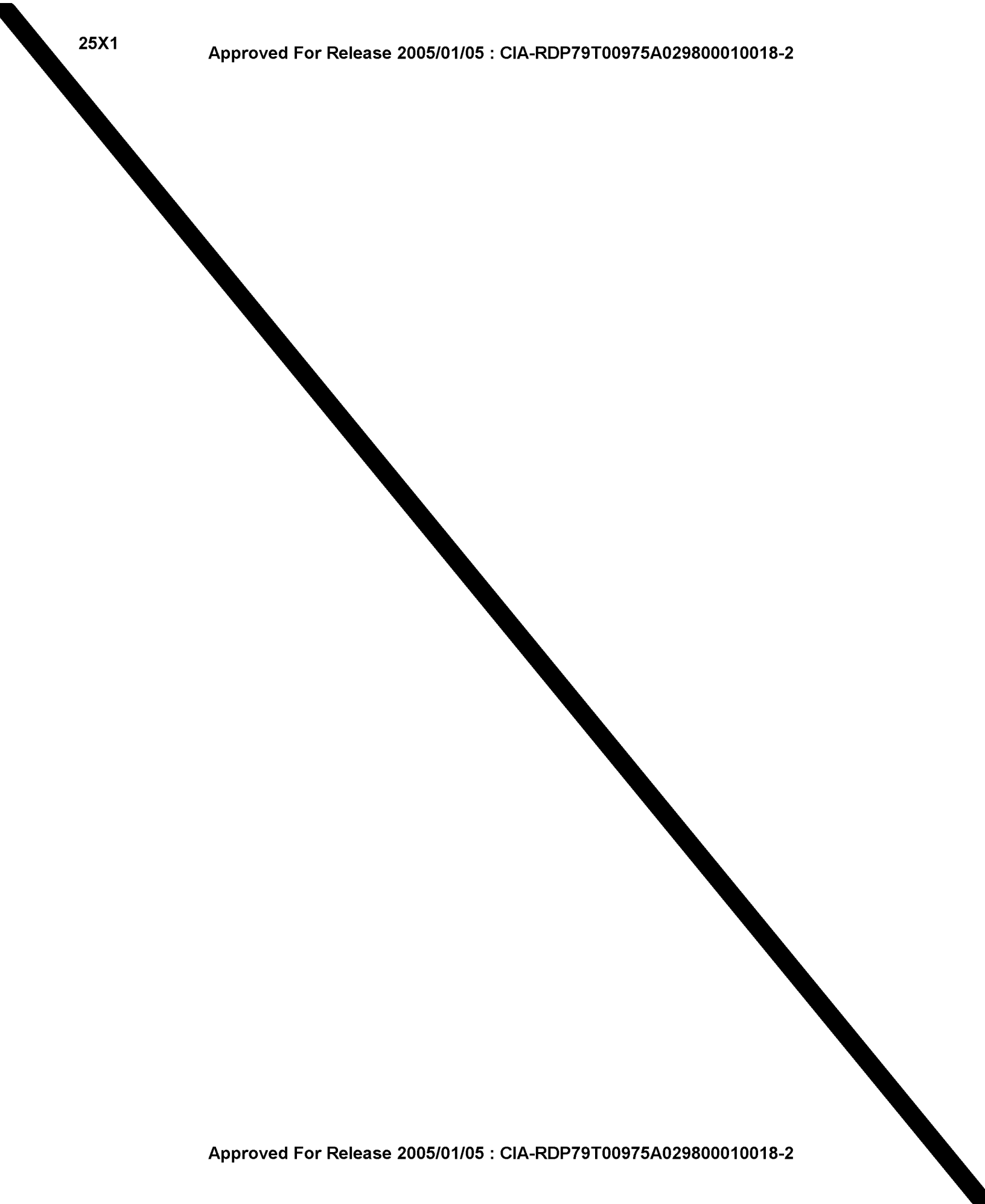

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[redacted]

CHINA: Indecisive Over Teng

25X1 [redacted] The Chinese leadership still has not filled high-level vacancies caused by deaths and purges over the past year because of continued indecision over what position to give Teng Hsiao-ping when he is rehabilitated. The leadership seems stalemated over the issue of whether to restore Teng to his original positions, including that of senior vice premier, or to follow the late Chou En-lai's wishes and elevate Teng to the premiership.

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[redacted]

25X1 [redacted] Teng's return could affect the status of some other members of the leadership, especially that of Party Chairman Hua Kuo-feng, who was the main beneficiary of Teng's fall. Teng has ties throughout the hierarchy, which Hua has yet to establish. Hua's elevation to the party chairmanship, made by a "rump" Politburo last fall, awaits confirmation by the party Central Committee.

25X1 [redacted] A meeting of the Central Committee, or more likely a party congress, may be some time in coming in view of accusations in the press that the fallen leftists handed out illegal party memberships to their friends. Weeding these people out

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of the party is likely to be a lengthy process. In the meantime, Hua's claim to the party chairmanship rests largely on a statement Mao Tse-tung made to him last April that does not explicitly designate Hua as Mao's successor.

25X1 [redacted] Treatment by the media in Peking of the Chinese leadership conveys the impression that Hua does not stand alone at the top. The media continue to give almost equal billing to Hua and to Defense Minister Yeh Chien-ying, who are usually mentioned together and separated from the rest of the leadership. Last month's official outpouring of praise for Chou En-lai, to whom Teng is more closely linked than Hua, has somewhat overshadowed Hua's own media coverage and in some cases put Hua in an unflattering light.

25X1 [redacted] Most signs indicate Hua has yet to establish himself as a strong--or even rightful--leader of the party. The impression of a lack of firm leadership at the top is strengthened by Peking's failure to move on some second-echelon appointments. Some national and provincial leadership positions remain vacant, and Peking passed up an opportunity at a national coal conference last month to name a new minister of coal--a relatively uncontroversial post--to replace the one who died last year.

25X1 [redacted] The Chinese leadership has made progress, however, in making some new, relatively uncontroversial appointments in the government apparatus, including three new ministers, and by moving quickly to replace a provincial party boss who died.

25X1 [redacted] The record on sensitive policy issues has been mixed. The Chinese started implementing a broad plan, on which there seems to be a general consensus, to modernize the civilian sector of the economy with a series of economic conferences that began in December and is scheduled to run until at least this spring.

25X1 [redacted] There is also a defense conference under way, but two articles published around the time of the conference suggest that defense spending remains a controversial issue. One article calls for building the civilian economy before modernizing the armed forces and the other argues that modernizing the defense industries will spur the development of the civilian economy.

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25X1 The leadership seems to be pointing in the direction of a fairly hard-line campaign against lower level supporters of the left, but there still may not be full agreement on this issue. Several provinces appear to be waging the campaign vigorously. One province even went beyond Chairman Hua's call to elect new local government organizations by calling for the election of new party committees at the local level and removing "bad elements" from the local party leadership groups. An article in the party theoretical journal, however, indicated some dissatisfaction with the progress of the campaign to date and urged local authorities to take the campaign more seriously.

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USSR-US: Reaction to News Conference

25X1 Soviet commentary by Tass yesterday on President Carter's news conference stressed the President's general references to arms limitation but omitted all of his remarks on specific disarmament proposals. Tass merely said that the President devoted "much attention" to strategic arms limitations and endorsed the "complete liquidation" of nuclear weapons.

25X1 Omission in the commentary of the call for a comprehensive test ban may have been at the behest of the Soviet leadership.

25X1 The Soviets in the past have used commentary and proposals on a comprehensive test ban as propaganda to put diplomatic pressure on both the US and China. Silence on the subject at this time suggests that the Soviets may be carefully reviewing recent US statements on a test ban before formulating

25X1 a response.

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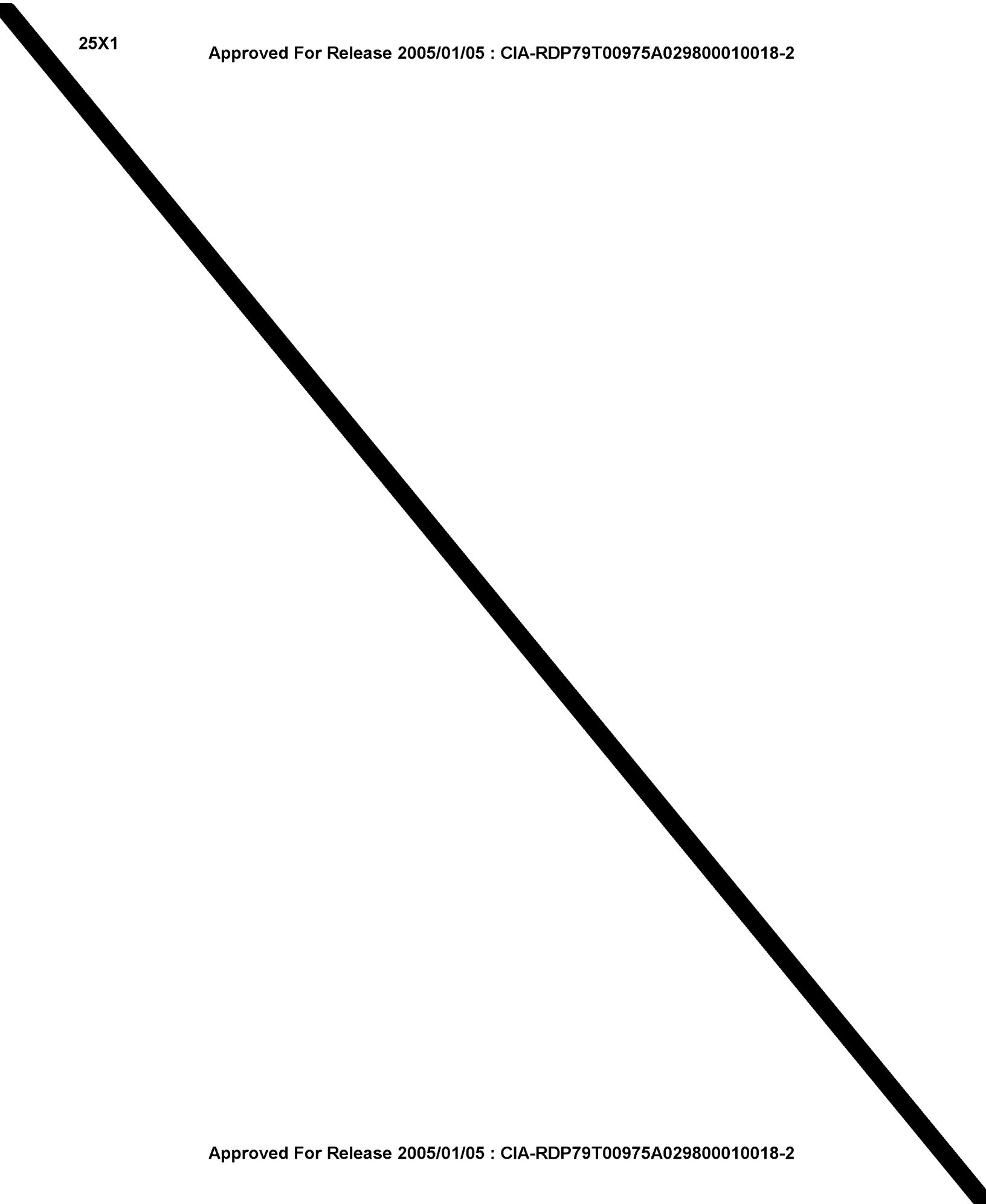

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SIERRA LEONE: New Demonstrations

25X1 New student disturbances in Sierra Leone have weakened President Stevens' position and placed him on the defensive. On Tuesday and Wednesday, mobs in Freetown stoned the political headquarters of Sierra Leone's ruling party and fired on a police station in the eastern part of the city. Rioting has also been reported in central and southern areas of the country 25X1

25X1 //Tension has increased over the deaths of some eight students during last week's demonstrations in Freetown and over the alleged harassment of innocent civilians by security police thereafter. Anti-government leaflets have been circulating throughout the country, and student demonstrators in the south recently called for Stevens' resignation.//

25X1 Stevens has adopted a conciliatory attitude toward student demands. He met with student leaders on two occasions early this week and announced late Tuesday that he would be prepared to adjourn Parliament and call new elections. He warned, however, that he was also prepared to exercise his full constitutional powers to enforce the present curfew and state of emergency.

25X1 //Stevens also met with student representatives and a broad spectrum of community leaders over the weekend in an attempt to quiet rising public indignation over the behavior of the security forces. He released one student leader who had been in police custody since the demonstrations last week and made another general appeal over the radio Monday night for calm and restraint.//

25X1 Despite these initiatives, schools in Freetown did not reopen on Monday as Stevens had promised. The government has announced that classes will resume today, but militant students will probably try to prolong the protests. 25X1
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TANZANIA-KENYA: Tensions Easing

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25X1 Some friction between the two countries probably will persist. They have not settled their dispute over the assets of the defunct East African Airlines 25X1

25X1 The airline was one of the last vestiges of the East African Community, which provided economic links between Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda. The demise of the airline will probably hasten Tanzania's effort to redirect its trade links toward Zambia and Mozambique. 25X1

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